

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 12, 2005

Deputy Attorney General
James B. Comey
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Mr. Comey:

Some time ago, I urged you to appoint an independent prosecutor to investigate allegations that the identity of covert intelligence agent Valerie Plame had been leaked to the press in violation of federal law. I was pleased that such a prosecutor was named and that a full investigation of the facts is proceeding.

Now, however, as we hear reports of the unfolding investigation into who leaked the Ms. Plame's name, I write to find out the standards under which security clearance is granted to the President's top advisors, including the Deputy Chief of Staff, and more importantly, the standards under which security clearance is suspended or revoked.

It goes without saying that whom our nation's trusts with highly classified information, such as a covert agent's identity and other national security material, is critically important in the protection of that information.

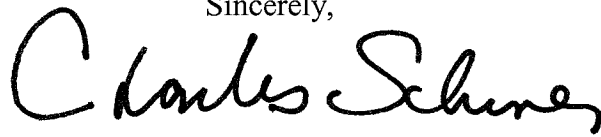
In light of current reports, please answer the following questions as soon as possible:

- What level of security clearance does the Deputy Chief of Staff typically have?
- What level of investigation is required to achieve that level of security clearance?
- Are there previous instances of someone's security clearance being suspended or revoked based on credible news reports that they participated in the leaking of classified information or similar conduct?
- What standards are used, and have been used in the past, with regard to suspending someone's clearance because of suspected and/or proved leaking or similar conduct?
- What are the procedures for someone's security clearance being suspended or revoked?

I know you both agree with me that classified information must be protected to the best of our ability as a nation and never used for partisan political purposes. I believe

it is imperative that we clearly identify the standards for access to classified information
and ensure the no one person is above those standards and above the law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles Schumer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "C".

Charles E. Schumer
U.S. Senator